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United States Department of Agriculture,
BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY,
Seed and Plant Introduction and Distribution,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

WESTERN WHEAT-GRASS (*Agropyron occidentale*).

This grass is also known as blue-stem, Colorado blue-stem, and blue-joint in different sections of the country. It is an upright grass, growing from 15 to 30 inches high, and is a native of every State west of the Mississippi River. However, it is of most importance on the plains and in the mountain valleys of the West. It resists drought to a marked degree and grows well on soils containing quite a high percentage of alkali. It produces quite a quantity of seed, which is eaten readily by stock and possesses considerable feeding value. In parts of the Northwest, especially in Montana, it is irrigated in the valleys and makes a heavy growth of excellent hay. The grass is very nutritious and is of much value both for hay and grazing. Attempts are being made to grow it under cultivation, and thus far they have been quite successful. Although the grass possesses creeping rootstocks, it has never, as far as has been observed, become a weed in any locality. However, care should be taken to prevent its spreading, should it show a tendency to do so. The seed of this grass is not yet on the market. The probabilities are, however, that it will be for sale in the near future.

Sowing.—The ground on which this grass is to be sown should be plowed thoroughly and well settled by means of a subsurface packer, disk harrow, roller, or common smoothing harrow. This should be done some time before seeding. Just before seeding the top of the ground should be stirred well with a disk harrow. Sowing may be done either broadcast or with a press drill, at the rate of 40 pounds of clean seed per acre. The seed should not be covered more than an inch deep, as it is rather slow in starting and the young plants are not very vigorous. In sections where there is a reasonable amount of moisture in the autumn or late summer and the winters are not too severe, it is best to sow the seed some time during the month of October. Where the falls are very dry and the winters extremely cold, April 1 to May 15 is a better time for sowing. Good results have been obtained by sowing in the spring with oats as a nurse crop, but as yet this method can not be recommended. Meadows after repeated mowing have a tendency to become sod bound and produce a much lighter yield of hay. They may be rejuvenated by a thorough cutting of the sod. A sharp, straight-toothed harrow, well weighted, will probably give as good results as any implement now on the market. Disk or spading harrows can also be used.

